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ABSTRACT

The vision for parent involvement presented in this document supports the California State Board of Education's policy initiative on parent involvement. Adopted in January 1989, the initiative includes a policy that encourages school districts and schools to implement long-term, comprehensive programs that build on the strengths of families. The following six types of parent involvement are identified: (1) help parents develop parenting skills; (2) provide parents with knowledge of home-learning techniques; (3) provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families; (4) promote clear school/family communication; (5) involve parents in instructional and support roles; and (6) support parents as decision-makers and leaders. Following the mission statement, individual sections discuss each of the home-learning goals of parent involvement programs, present supporting research findings, examine state and local implementation strategies, and list outcomes expected by the year 2000. The program goals include the following: public awareness and support; policy development and program planning; implementation; teacher and administrator training; parent and community training; teacher incentives; early interventions; and accessing resources. Appendices contain a checklist for quality criteria, information on Chapter 16 programs to encourage parent participation, and a list of publications available from the California Department of Education. (Contains 34 references.) (LMI)

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CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC PLAN

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CALIFORNIA STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

Recommendations for Transforming Schools Through Family-Community-School Partnerships

Prepared by the
Parenting and Community Education Office
California Department of Education

Publishing Information

The *California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education* was developed by the Parenting and Community Education Office, California Department of Education, in collaboration with the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Parent Involvement. (See page vi for the membership of the full committee.) It was edited by Janet Lundin, working in cooperation with Vivian Burton, principal writer of the document and Coordinator, Parent and Community Education Office. It was designed and prepared for photo-offset production by the staff of the Bureau of Publications, with the artwork, cover, and interior design created and prepared by Juan Sanchez. Typesetting was done by Jeannette Huff.

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Foreword

The California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education addresses the critical issues affecting the contribution of families to students' learning and to the improvement of our schools. The recommendations reflected in this plan will guide the California Department of Education, county offices of education, school districts, and schools as they explore together strategies that meet the needs of children and families.

This plan does not advocate a solitary solution for achieving effective schools through family involvement. It does discuss the latest research, strategies, and guidelines for involving parents in building sound educational infrastructures. The collaborative approaches presented will help develop positive home-school-community relations and minimize barriers to family involvement in schools.

Researchers, educators, and policymakers are convinced that family involvement in education will remain a priority agenda into the twenty-first century. To facilitate the implementation of a successful family involvement agenda, all citizens must make a concerted effort to help our schools develop policies and programs that communicate successful strategies and demonstrate a commitment to family involvement.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Preface

The planning process to develop this document began in October, 1990, with meetings of the California Department of Education's Intradepartmental Committee on Parent Involvement. The 15-member group represents units in the Specialized Programs, Field Services, and Curriculum and Instructional Leadership branches of the California Department of Education. The Intradepartmental Committee met quarterly to identify and discuss issues and activities related to implementing effective programs of parent involvement. During the course of the year, the committee invited presenters to its meetings to share information on how family involvement programs that show promise are being implemented in school districts throughout the state. Many of the program descriptions have been included in *Parent Involvement Programs in California Public Schools: Parents, Schools, and Communities Working Together* (Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1991).

In February, 1991, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig appointed 22 members to the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Parent Involvement. The committee, together with the Intradepartmental Committee on Parent Involvement, examined critical issues, set goals, and developed recommendations for parent involvement in California schools.

The vision for parent involvement presented in this document supports the California State Board of Education's policy initiative on parent involvement. Adopted in January, 1989, the initiative includes a policy that encourages school districts and schools to implement long-term, comprehensive programs that build on the strengths of families.

According to a 1990 Department of Education survey of parent involvement programs in California school districts, fewer than 10 percent of the districts had initiated the fundamental changes advocated in the State Board of Education's initiative. Since the passage of Assembly Bill 322 (Waters, 1991), many more school districts and schools are seeking assistance on linking family and community interests and activities to their restructuring efforts.

This plan encourages California school districts to examine their progress according to the critical issues, recommended strategies, and effective school practices presented. Educators will find that the research information presented supports family involvement as a necessary resource for school improvement.

SHIRLEY A. THORNTON
Deputy Superintendent
Specialized Programs Branch

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Assistant Superintendent and Director
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Acknowledgments

Sincere appreciation is extended to members of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Parent Involvement, which was established in February, 1991, by State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig. The members of the advisory committee were the following:[1]

Henry Alder, Professor of Mathematics, University of California, Davis; and Co-Chair, California Department of Education and University of California Joint Subcommittee on Parent Involvement

Billy Alexander, President, Western Coalition of Chapter 1 Parents

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Peggy Bielen, Director, Project Self-Esteem, Enhancing Education, Inc.

George Bloch, Superintendent, Bellflower Unified School District

Kay Campbell, President, The Advisory Council on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs

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[1]The titles of the persons and the names of the organizations listed here were current when this publication was prepared.

Sally Thiefoldt, Director, Operation Breakthrough Family Counseling Center

Virginia Thompson, Director, Family Math, Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California, Berkeley

Mary Sue Ammon, Research Consultant, Graduate School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, was the special consultant to the committee.

Members of the California Department of Education's Intradepartmental Committee on Parent Involvement who participated in the strategic planning process were the following:[1]

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[1]The titles of the persons and the names of the offices and units in the California Department of Education listed here were current when this publication was prepared.

The principal writer of this document was **Vivian C. Burton,** Coordinator of the Parenting and Community Education Office, California Department of Education. She also chaired meetings of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Parent Involvement and the Intradepartmental Committee on Parent Involvement. With **Henry Alder** she was the co-chair of the California Department of Education and University of California Joint Subcommittee on Parent Involvement.

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Vivian C. Burton, Coordinator

Carol A. Monroe, Consultant

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Introduction

Parent involvement is the support and participation of parents at home, in the community, and at the school site that directly and positively affect the educational performance of children. This definition recognizes the contributions of families in helping children to succeed.

Through strong programs of parent involvement, children, their families, and the schools benefit. Children's academic achievement and behavior improve in schools that have high levels of parent involvement. Furthermore, such parents are more supportive of schools and school personnel. And school personnel report that support from parents brings greater satisfaction in their work (Liontos, 1991).[1]

At the national level parent involvement has been endorsed as a strategy for school improvement. The first national goal for education listed in *America 2000: An Education Strategy* states that "by the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn."[2] As the first teachers of their children, parents must provide the foundation for learning before their children enter school. Clearly, the achievement of this goal and other national goals will require strong public support.

This strategic plan supports the national goals and the agenda from *America 2000: An Education Strategy* and represents the results of a year's work by staff from the California Department of Education working in collaboration with the State Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Parent Involvement. The plan also reflects the California State Board of Education's policy on parent involvement and recent state legislation addressing parent involvement in education.

The State Board initiated an effective mechanism that encourages strong bonds between parents and schools to recognize the important role that families must play in the education of children.

The Board's policy on parent involvement encourages parent involvement across the grades and recommends that school districts and schools develop comprehensive, sustained programs designed to:

1. Help parents develop parenting skills and foster conditions at home that support children's efforts in learning.
2. Provide parents with knowledge of techniques designed to assist children in learning at home.
3. Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families.
4. Promote clear, two-way communication between the school and the family as to school programs and children's progress.

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[1] See "Selected References" for full bibliographical data.
[2] *America 2000: An Education Strategy.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1991, p. 3.

5. Involve parents, after appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school.
6. Support parents as decision makers and develop their leadership in governance, advisory, and advocacy roles.

An examination of the latest research on effective schools and parent involvement and a review of state and federal legislation and the California Department of Education's initiatives, such as the California Local Education Reform Network (C-LERN) and Every Student Succeeds, contributed to the strategies for change proposed in this document. School district personnel will want to focus specifically on the strategies for local educational agencies presented under each goal.

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Background

California was the first state in the nation with both a state board of education comprehensive policy on parent involvement and a state law mandating parent involvement in school districts and schools. The policy of the California State Board of Education, adopted on January 13, 1989, outlines six research-based types of parent involvement for districts to implement. Further support for parent involvement resulted with the passage of Assembly Bill 322 (Waters). Effective in January, 1991, Assembly Bill 322 supports parent involvement policies and programs as required in the federal amendments to the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act and makes the implementation of parent involvement a contingency for receipt of state school improvement and economic impact aid funds.

In 1988 the California Department of Education's Parenting and Community Education Office was assigned responsibility for providing statewide leadership and support for school districts' parent involvement efforts. The office facilitates the implementation of the State Board of Education's policy by providing technical assistance and training to help districts implement the types of parent involvement outlined in the policy. In collaboration with other units in the Department, the Parenting and Community Education Office has demonstrated support for the State Board's policy according to the types of parent involvement presented as follows:

Type 1. **Help parents develop parenting skills and foster conditions at home that support children's efforts in learning.**

During 1990 the Mathematics, Science, and Environmental Education Unit, the Sacramento Educational Cable Consortium, and the Parenting and Community Education Office collaborated on the production of a series of video clips for a cable television program. Titled "Parent Power–Math," the program emphasized strategies on effective parenting skills.

In October and November of 1990 and 1991, the California Department of Education sponsored four fall institutes for parent involvement in northern and southern California. Using a training-of-trainers approach, the fall institutes trained 80 Chapter 1 program improvement school teams in 1990 and 130 school teams in 1991 to help parents strengthen their parenting skills and create a positive learning environment in the home. Training guides, resource materials, and follow-up assistance helped schools to implement school-based workshops. Parenting skill topics included Building Family Self-esteem and Effective Discipline for Home and School.

The California Department of Education and the University of California Joint Subcommittee of Parent Involvement published parenting booklets and, on request, disseminated them to school districts.

The California Department of Education presented parenting skills workshops at county and statewide conferences and school district in-service meetings.

Type 2. **Provide parents with knowledge of techniques designed to assist children in learning at home.**

The 1990 and 1991 California Department of Education fall institutes provided school teams with knowledge of techniques designed to help parents enhance learning at home. The workshop topics included Family Reading, Family Study Skills, Designing Effective Home Learning Activities, and Home-School Communication Strategies.

Home-school partnership training, conducted by the Department's Compensatory Education, Migrant Education, and American Indian Education units, provided additional support to school districts to help parents enhance learning at home.

The Department's Bureau of Publications Sales Unit disseminated, on request, a brochure, *Parents Are Teachers, Too,* to school districts, schools, and parent organizations.*

The *Changing Curriculum Series* of parent booklets in mathematics, English–language arts, and history–social science, developed by curriculum units in the Department of Education, were disseminated at statewide meetings and conferences. Presenters at the fall institutes for parent involvement used these booklets during the training series.*

Type 3. **Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families.**

The California Department of Education's Interagency Partnership Committee on Parent Involvement was established in 1990 to promote collaboration and support for the State Board of Education's policy on parent involvement. The state agencies forming the partnership are the State of California Department of Health Services, California State Social Services Department, and the California Department of Youth Authority. Meetings focused on issues affecting the diverse needs of families and possible strategies for interagency collaboration to enhance family education.

Type 4. **Promote clear, two-way communication between the school and the family as to school programs and children's progress.**

Workshops presented at the fall institutes and home-school partnership training promoted effective home-school communication. Included were sessions on strategies for effective parent-teacher conferencing and on classroom visitations and observations.

Type 5. **Involve parents, after appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school.**

Staff in the Parenting and Community Education Office provided technical assistance to help school districts implement Intergenerational Education programs. The programs encourage older school volunteers, such as retirees and

*A complete listing of this series and information on ordering copies appear on pages 43 and 44.

grandparents, to become involved with schools. Eleven school districts received Intergenerational Education program grant awards during 1990–91 and 1991–92.

Type 6. **Support parents as decision makers and develop their leadership in governance, advisory, and advocacy roles.**

Parent leaders representing organizations primarily focusing on parent involvement, support, and leadership participated in the strategic planning meetings from which came the concepts for the development of this document. Participants' recommendations were vital in helping to shape the strategic plan.

The California Department of Education provides continual training to develop parents' leadership skills. Advisory committees, such as Chapter 1 committees, receive assistance, support, and training through conferences and workshops sponsored by the Compensatory Education Office. The Office of School Improvement provides leadership and training to school site councils and school staff receiving school improvement funding.

Critical Issues, Mission Statement, and Goals

This section presents the critical issues, mission statement, and goals that support parent involvement programs in California public schools.

Critical Issues

Members of the Department of Education's Intradepartmental Committee on Parent Involvement and the Superintendent's advisory committee identified key issues facing the successful development, delivery, and evaluation of parent involvement programs in California public schools. The issues were examined in light of research, information sharing, policies, and national and state trends. The most important questions that guided the strategic planning process are the following:

1. How are the different types of parent involvement related to various desired outcomes for students, parents, and schools?
2. What local factors affect the implementation and the quality of parent involvement programs; for example, school, culture, union contracts, school climate, and needs of students, staff, parents, and community?
3. How can state and local parent involvement policies and regulations be translated into action plans?
4. How can teachers and school administrators be better prepared and supported in their efforts to implement comprehensive parent involvement programs?
5. How can families be better prepared and supported in their efforts to assume various roles in relation to schools and the education of their children?
6. What resources are available at little or no cost to schools to help support their parent involvement policy and their planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of programs?
7. What funding sources can be used to support the school?
8. What can schools, parents, and communities do together to meet the diverse needs of children?

Establishing links between families, schools, and communities requires specific efforts toward change in state and local educational agencies. The mission statement and goals that follow helped to focus the strategic planning process.

Mission Statement

The mission statement for parent involvement programs is to promote increased student academic success by facilitating the development and implementation of comprehensive, continuing family-community-school partnerships in all California schools.

Goals

The goals for parent involvement programs are as follows:

Goal 1 **California citizens will recognize and support family-school involvement as an integral part of every school system.**

Goal 2 **Each school district will develop a written framework and provide support for family-school involvement through grade twelve.**

Goal 3 **Schools will design parent involvement programs that influence the successful growth and development of children.**

Goal 4 **Teachers and administrators will reach out to families of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to increase family-school partnerships.**

Goal 5 **Schools will maximize opportunities for parents and other community members to participate in and support children's education at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels.**

Goal 6 **School districts will establish incentive programs in schools to encourage teachers to extend the school curriculum to the home.**

Goal 7 **Parents will have access to the resources and training needed to strengthen the learning environment of their young children during the preschool years.**

Goal 8 **School districts will use available resources and pursue funding and support from public and private sources to meet the goals, strategies, and activities in the *California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education.***

Summary of State and Local Educational Strategies

The strategic planning process focuses on many strategies that can be used to build partnerships between families and schools. The most compelling strategies for transforming the mission and goals into action plans for implementation are those designed to:

1. **Build public awareness and support for family involvement in education.** Endorsements for family involvement must come from school districts, schools, businesses, and community organizations; for example, churches and social groups.
2. **Establish comprehensive districtwide parent involvement policies and plans.** School districts must develop polices for parent involvement and plans for implementation that will underscore the importance of family-school partnerships.
3. **Implement high quality, comprehensive, and sequential school and community-based programs that promote meaningful parent involvement across all grades.** Schools must design parent involvement programs that support the research-based types of parent involvement identified in the State Board's policy on parent involvement and described previously.
4. **Strengthen the capacity of teachers and administrators to work with families of diverse backgrounds.** Preservice and in-service training programs must focus on attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable educators to improve relationships with parents and involve parents in children's learning.
5. **Strengthen the capacity of families and other community members to become involved in the education of children at all levels of the educational system.** Schools must develop family involvement programs that train and support parents in multiple roles throughout a child's education.
6. **Provide teachers with incentives to develop innovative ideas that help to link parent involvement to classroom learning.** Schools must facilitate and support teachers' efforts to build relationships with parents and provide increased opportunities for parent involvement at school and at home.
7. **Promote early intervention programs designed to strengthen and reinforce the role of families in children's growth and development.** Programs must be established to link families to education, health, and social services agencies during a child's preschool years.
8. **Use all available resources to implement and evaluate the *California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education*.** School districts must maximize existing state, federal, and local resources and form partnerships with public and private sources.

The sections that follow contain a discussion of each goal and supporting research evidence, an examination of strategies for implementing parent involvement programs at state and local levels, and a listing of outcomes expected by the year 2000.

GOAL

1

Public Awareness and Support

California citizens will recognize and support family-school involvement as an integral part of every school system.

A growing body of research reveals that the involvement of parents and communities in schools strengthens the relationship among school personnel, families, and community members and improves students' achievement and attitudes toward school. Unfortunately, only a limited number of parents are involved in their children's education. To increase these numbers, educators need to promote public awareness and support for parent involvement in education.

National surveys have addressed this issue:

- The U. S. Department of Education's *National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: A Profile of the American Eighth Grader* (1990), a survey of 24,600 eighth grade students in public and private schools, showed that about half of the students' parents were unconcerned about schools and their children's performance. Two-thirds of the students said that they never or rarely discussed school with their parents. A survey of the parents showed that about half of them had never had contact with their children's schools.
- A 1990 national survey conducted by The National PTA/Chrysler and commissioned by *Newsweek Magazine* reported that more than half of the parents surveyed had not attended any school events, such as back-to-school night, PTA meetings, or other meetings organized for parents (*Education in America*, 1991).

Support for parent involvement must begin at the school level, where the attitudes of teachers and administrators and the school's practices encourage and create opportunities to build trusting relationships with families. The resulting increased school-level support for parent involvement will generate strong community support for these programs.

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Significant increase in public support for the involvement of parents in education and for community networks that promote this issue
- Creative multimedia campaigns that contribute to the public's awareness of parent involvement

STRATEGY 1

Build public awareness and support for family involvement in education.

1. The California Department of Education will promote broadly based support for family involvement in education by:
   a. Disseminating to newspapers and radio and television stations information on the research, educational practices, and promising school-level parent involvement programs that support student learning. The sharing of this information in public service announcements will be encouraged.
   b. Establishing networks with business and community organizations to promote parent involvement. The California Department of Education will contact business and community groups and associations for senior citizens to publicize and sponsor parent-child activities, videos for training parents, and activities in the school and community to encourage parent involvement in education.
   c. Designing public relations materials for dissemination at statewide conferences; for example, buttons, posters, and bookmarks.
2. The California Department of Education will coordinate school recognition activities to showcase successful parent involvement programs that focus on:
   a. Selecting and recognizing innovative program models at school sites. School sites for 15 of the programs described in *Parent Involvement Programs in California Public Schools: Parents, Schools, and Communities Working Together* will be visited by teams from the California Department of Education from 1992 through 1994. The programs will be rated according to their effectiveness in serving families, and five will be selected for statewide recognition.
   b. Continuing to update the content of *Parent Involvement Programs in California Public Schools* with descriptions of innovative programs in local school districts.

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

1. School districts will involve parents, businesses, and the community to encourage family support for and participation in children's education by:
   a. Asking the staff of the district's public information office to write newspaper articles that showcase local schools' parent involvement efforts
   b. Contacting businesses to advocate partnerships between parents and schools and encouraging businesses to devote long-term human and financial resources to support schools and help with conducting public relations campaigns
   c. Identifying companies that encourage employees who are parents or guardians to visit their children's school during the workday
2. School districts will coordinate school recognition activities that showcase successful parent involvement programs, including:
   a. Developing videotapes of outstanding school activities for parent involvement
   b. Recognizing schools and individuals during local conferences, school board meetings, and special events
   c. Publicizing successful parent involvement programs through articles in educational journals and newspapers

GOAL

2

Policy Development and Program Planning

Each school district will develop a written framework and provide support for family-school involvement through grade twelve.

Researchers (Williams and Chavkin, 1989) at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory found that parent involvement works best when districts and school sites develop written policies. These policies establish the legitimacy of parent involvement and provide a framework for its development and implementation. Other research studies support this concept:

- McLaughlin and Shields (1987) recognized that policies with district support would enhance opportunities for low-income parents in schools.
- Don Davies (1987) at the Boston University Institute for Responsive Education noted in the findings from his research that specific, prescriptive policies are likely to work best. Furthermore, polices should require periodic evaluation and monitoring and provide support to assist with implementation; for example, money, technical assistance, and staff time.

Since 1988 schools receiving federal Chapter 1 funds have been required to implement policies, programs, and activities for the involvement of parents. The California Legislature recognized this federal requirement and made it an integral part of Assembly Bill 322 (Chapter 16 of *Education Code* sections 11500–11506) as a condition for receiving federal funds under Chapter 1. California law (*Education Code* Section 11504) also requires each school district with schools not governed by federal Chapter 1 legislation to adopt a policy on parent involvement. The goals stated in *Education Code* Section 11502 are to:

1. Engage parents positively in their children's education by helping them develop skills to use at home that support their children's academic efforts and development as responsible members of society.
2. Provide parents with techniques and strategies to improve their children's academic success and to assist their children in learning at home.

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Periodic school district evaluations of parent involvement policies and the level of support provided
- Development and implementation of a kindergarten through grade twelve comprehensive school-based plan for parent involvement

3. Build consistent and effective communication between the home and the school so that parents will know when and how to assist their children in support of classroom learning activities.
4. Train teachers and administrators to communicate effectively with parents.
5. Integrate parent involvement programs, including compliance with Chapter 16 of *Education Code* sections 11500–11506, in the school's master plan for academic accountability.

As school districts continue their efforts to restructure, they will need to establish and revise policies to promote parent involvement. To strengthen the policy development process, they should:

1. Form an advisory committee, using existing committees with a broadly based representation, or recruit and select school personnel, parents, and community representatives who are deeply committed to school improvement and parent involvement.
2. Clarify the advisory committee's role, responsibilities, and procedures for making recommendations for the policy development process.
3. Make the committee aware of the State Board's policy on parent involvement and on relevant research that links student achievement and parent involvement.
4. Review and appraise the effectiveness of current district policies, procedures, and programs that support parent involvement; and identify needs related to the development of a district policy on parent involvement.
5. Draft a policy based on the district's philosophy and goals and on information gathered from the assessment of needs.
6. Recommend that the local school district governing board approve the proposed policy after the district superintendent has done so.
7. Publicize the adopted policy through television and radio announcements, district and school newsletters, and local newspapers. Provide information on policies to school and community groups.
8. Develop a comprehensive district plan to implement the policy through grade twelve.

Parents and other community members should be involved in the development of the district's implementation plan. A district's office staff can coordinate program planning and development, provide leadership and support to schools, coordinate district and school site training, and provide resources to implement the plan. The district's implementation plan can be used as a model for long-term, comprehensive planning and implementation of parent involvement at the school level. School site teams, including parents, teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, and other support staff, must be included in the development of the district's comprehensive plan and involved in its ongoing assessment.

STRATEGY 2

Establish comprehensive districtwide parent involvement policies and plans.

The California Department of Education will continue to provide technical assistance on policy development and program implementation by:

1. Disseminating the program advisory, "Guidelines for the Development of Policies on Parent Involvement," which is a practical guide for school districts.
2. Providing training to increase leadership skills in the development of a school district's policies and plans on parent involvement.
3. Identifying agencies and independent contractors skilled in developing policies for parent involvement.
4. Continuing to publicize the State Board of Education's policy on parent involvement. Units in the California Department of Education will distribute printed materials on the Board of Education's policy to schools and for meetings and conferences of public and private agencies. (Many school districts have used the Board's policy as a model for their local policies.)

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

1. School districts will support the development of policies and programs on parent involvement by:
   a. Establishing broadly based representation on task forces or advisory committees that include parents and community representatives. Members will play an important role in the policy development process.
   b. Contacting the California Department of Education for guidelines on policy development and for sample policies from school districts.
2. School districts will develop a district plan to implement a comprehensive program of parent involvement across all grades by:
   a. Appointing a member of the district staff to coordinate and facilitate districtwide parent involvement activities. A district parent involvement coordinator with the knowledge and skills to work with families of diverse backgrounds and who is committed to strong school-family relations has a greater potential to provide leadership and support to schools.
   b. Involving school personnel, parents, and community representatives in decisions regarding planning, implementing, and evaluating programs.
   c. Developing a comprehensive implementation plan that includes district goals and objectives; strategies and activities for implementation; key personnel; funding and other resources (for example, staff time, materials, training, and so forth); time lines, and strategies for monitoring and assessment.

GOAL

3

Implementation

Schools will design parent involvement programs that influence the successful growth and development of children.

The National Committee for Citizens in Education's (NCCE's) publication, *The Evidence Continues to Grow: Parent Involvement Improves Student Achievement* (1987), contains reports from research studies that reveal some of the major benefits of parents who are involved as partners in their children's education. Parents find that their children achieve higher grades and test scores, more positive attitudes, and improved behavior. Students from schools with strong parent involvement programs had higher overall achievement than did students from other schools. Studies reported by NCCE on parent involvement have also concluded that:

- Involving parents in their children's formal education improves students' achievement.

  An extensive review of the literature by Rhoda Becher (1984) demonstrated that parent and family involvement plays a significant role in determining children's intelligence, competence, and achievement.

- Comprehensive, long-lasting, and well-planned parent involvement has the most effect.

  The Board of Education's six types of parent involvement, based on research studies and described in the Introduction, provide a model for the development of comprehensive, sequential, and long-term programs of family-school involvement.

The benefits of parent involvement are not confined to early childhood or the elementary level; involving parents continuously throughout high school produces strong effects.

The *National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988: A Profile of the American Eighth Grader* (1990) reported that eighth graders are more likely to turn to various family members when planning their high school program. Most of the 24,000 students surveyed discussed their high school plans with their mothers (52 percent) rather than with their fathers (31 percent), their teachers (8 percent), or their counselors (6 percent). The study confirmed the important role that parents play in their children's education and reinforced the need for schools to

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Successful restructuring of schools through the active involvement of parents
- Alignment of school district parent involvement programs with the California State Board's policy on parent involvement

provide timely information to parents about high school curricula and graduation requirements.

Research studies indicate that almost any form of parent involvement appears to improve student performance; however, student achievement is greater with high levels of meaningful involvement (Sattes, 1989). Researchers at the Stanford Center for the Study of Families conducted studies of parent involvement at six San Francisco high schools. The researchers concluded that children performed better at school when their parents attended parent-oriented school events. Results of the survey of parents and students showed that, regardless of the parents' level of education, a positive correlation existed between attendance of parents at events especially planned for them and their children's receiving higher grades (Dornbusch and Ritter, 1988).

STRATEGY 3

Implement high quality, comprehensive, and sequential school and community-based programs that promote meaningful parent involvement across all grades.

To help schools engage parents in meaningful parent involvement programs, the California Department of Education will:

1. **Help parents develop parenting skills and foster conditions at home that support children's efforts in learning by:**
   a. Cooperating with the University of California Joint Subcommittee on Parent Involvement to support local educational agencies by:
      (1) Developing new and updated informational brochures and booklets for parents and school personnel that focus on the responsibilities of families to support student learning from prekindergarten through grade twelve
      (2) Publishing a resource guide that recognizes successful parent center model programs and provides guidelines for implementing them
   b. Working through the institutes for parent involvement and home-school partnership training and through videotapes and workshops to provide statewide training, follow-up assistance, and resources to help administrators, teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals implement family and school practices that influence student motivation, learning, and development.
   c. Collaborating with local television stations to design a variety of public service television spots that focus on strategies to help parents guide their children's growth and development from preschool through high school.

d. Working closely with the California State PTA and other organizations for parents to disseminate current information on resources to meet the needs of school districts in designing their parent involvement programs related to parenting and child-rearing issues.

2. **Provide parents with knowledge of techniques designed to assist children in learning at home by:**

   a. Providing materials and training to school district personnel for designing home-learning activities that encourage parents to monitor and assist their children at home. The training will include information on school practices to foster learning at home.

   b. Offering to school districts workshops and statewide parent involvement training programs that encourage and provide opportunities for parents to work with their children on reinforcement activities (examples are Family Math and Family Science training).

   c. Disseminating information and resources to strengthen parents' knowledge of the school's curriculum. The *Changing Curriculum Series* in mathematics, language arts, and history–social science will provide parents with information on the curriculum and with a range of activities to guide students' academic success.

3. **Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families by:**

   a. Disseminating information on promising school-based interagency collaboration programs designed to serve families and children. Information about successful interagency program models will be featured at statewide conferences.

   b. Continuing to support interagency collaboration on parent involvement with cooperation from social, health, and youth service agencies. The Parenting and Community Education Office will identify resources for materials and staff development programs that will help school districts to better serve the diverse needs of children and families.

   c. Administering the Healthy Start Support Services for Children Program. Funded under Senate Bill 620 (Presley, 1991), the Healthy Start Program provides $20 million in planning and operational grants to school districts and county offices of education for implementing coordinated services for children and their families at or near school sites. Technical assistance for developing grant proposals for Senate Bill 620 and implementing local Healthy Start programs is provided by the California Department of Education's Interagency Children and Youth Services Division.

4. **Promote clear, two-way communication between the school and family as to school programs and children's progress by:**

   a. Facilitating the implementation of Assembly Bill 322 (*Education Code* Section 11502 "Purpose"), designed "to train teachers and administrators to communicate

effectively with parents." The Department will provide a series of professional development workshops to assist teachers and principals in designing effective forms of communication.

b. Using videotape presentations in Chapter 1 institutes to train parents in home-school communication skills. Topics will cover parent involvement, home-school partnership trainings, statewide conferences and workshops, and strategies and materials to be used.

5. **Involve parents, after appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school by:**

   a. Building support for volunteer programs designed to enhance the academic and social achievement of students. The Department will provide training and disseminate guidelines for involving parents and older school volunteers and mentors in schools. Training will focus on planning, implementing, and evaluating academic volunteer and mentoring programs, including strategies on recruitment.

   b. Assigning the Department's Intergenerational Education Program Committee to review and evaluate outcomes of programs and build support for programs that focus on older volunteers in schools. The committee will collaborate with the Department on projects to help identify and disseminate information on model programs and practices that provide support for schools and families.

6. **Support parents as decision makers and develop their leadership in governance, advisory, and advocacy roles.** Many programs that support parents in codecision-making roles are identified in *Parent Involvement Programs in California Public Schools: Families, Schools, and Communities Working Together* (Sacramento: California Department of Education, 1991). The Department will continue to identify and showcase promising programs that support this type of parent involvement. The Department will provide, on request, training for school-based management councils.

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Activities in Local Educational Agencies

Through grade twelve school districts and schools will:

1. **Help parents develop parenting skills and foster conditions at home that support children's efforts in learning.** Schools will provide multiple opportunities for parents to develop their parenting and child-rearing skills to help children succeed in school and life. Schools will encourage parents by providing training and information, in appropriate languages, to meet their parental obligations. Parents must provide safe, drug-free, and positive home conditions; proper nutrition; and quality health care; and they must foster self-confidence, appropriate behavior, and high expectations.

2. **Provide parents with the knowledge of techniques designed to assist children in learning at home.** Parents will be encouraged to monitor television viewing and use of free time; supervise homework; and participate in parent, child, or teacher-initiated home-learning activities, including daily reading and family discussions that reinforce or enrich children's classroom learning.

3. **Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families.** Schools will communicate reliable information to link parents to health, mental health, social services, and other community agencies that support families, including libraries, museums, parks and recreational programs, and so forth. Schools will seek public and private grants to plan and implement comprehensive, coordinated services for children and their families. For example, Senate Bill 620, the Healthy Start Support Services for Children Act, provides planning and operational grants for establishing school link services for children and their families.

4. **Promote clear, two-way communication between the school and the family as to school programs and children's progress.** Schools will provide many opportunities to enhance communication between staff and parents on school programs and students' academic performance. Training will be provided for school administrators, teachers, and parents to improve the frequency and effectiveness of home-school communication.

   Schools will ensure that parents have access to knowledge about the quality of the school curriculum and instructional practices; district and school policies for discipline, homework, attendance, and extracurricular and intramural activities, and so forth; and requirements for student placement and high school graduation. Accountability information on the quality of education at each school will be communicated to parents, including summaries of a school's annual *Performance Report for California*

Schools, which documents a school's progress, and the School Accountability Report Card, which includes information on student dropout rates by ethnicity and the percentage of high school students, listed by ethnicity, who completed the University of California's A through F requirements. (*Note: The Performance Report for California Schools* is published according to specific grade levels for elementary schools, middle grades, and high schools as data from the State Assessment Program become available. This publication may be obtained from the Program Evaluation and Research Division, California Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, California [mailing address: P.O. Box 944272, Sacramento, CA 94244-2720]. Each school district governing board in California is required to publish a School Accountability Report Card for each school in its jurisdiction. The board is required to inform parents and the community about the availability of this publication.)

5. **Involve parents, after appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school.** School personnel will recruit and train parents to assist teachers and students in the classroom, on educational field trips, and in a variety of nonteaching school enrichment activities. Parents may support their children by attending school events, including student performances, parent meetings or seminars, assemblies, and sports events.

6. **Support parents as decision makers and develop their leadership in governance, advisory, and advocacy roles**. Parents will be trained to assume leadership on advisory committees or other district-level and school-level decision-making councils. Parents representing children at all grade levels will become involved in districtwide curriculum review and improvement activities. Schools will invite parents and participate as decision makers in planning and assessing students' needs in the evaluation of instructional materials and programs.

GOAL

4

Teachers and Administrators

Teachers and administrators will reach out to families of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds to increase family-school partnerships.

The enactment of California legislation mandating parent involvement in children's schooling requires California teachers and administrators to develop skills in working with families of diverse cultural backgrounds. The California Legislature in Assembly Concurrent Resolution Number 45 (Bates, 1991) requests all public and private institutions of higher learning with approved teacher training programs to implement instruction related to parent involvement. In the restructuring of schools, teachers and administrators are expected to initiate activities to involve all parents at school and at home, regardless of socioeconomic status, educational level, or culture.

To build the kind of partnership needed, educators must first recognize the strengths of families and build trust and mutual respect. This need was clearly recognized in the work of James Comer, which began at the Yale Medical School's Child Study Center in 1968. Comer believed that children from racial and ethnic minorities performed poorly in academic subjects because of the social and cultural gap between the home and school. To support his belief, Comer and his colleagues, with help from the Ford Foundation, developed school-based management teams in two inner-city schools in New Haven, Connecticut. Parents brought into the schools were given a role on administrative teams, and training was provided to help teachers improve their knowledge of child development and ability to work with poor children and parents. The teams included parents, teachers, administrators, and medical health professionals.

The efforts of the Comer group helped poor families and schools develop high expectations for students' accomplishments and build trust and mutual respect. The supportive bonds established by the New Haven families and schools also significantly improved students' academic achievement, school attendance, and behavior. Comer's school-based improvement model operates in all New Haven elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school and in more than 200 schools nationwide (Goldberg, 1990).

The culture of the school and the relationship among staff members help determine whether parents will assume willing partnerships. If the beliefs and attitudes of school personnel exclude families from

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Implementation of effective staff in-service training to improve staff capacity to work with parents as partners
- Expansion of family involvement methods in teacher training

schools, parents will not assume vital roles. Strong, positive leadership that supports family involvement will help establish warm, caring environments that attract children and their families.

STRATEGY 4

Strengthen the capacity of teachers and administrators to work with families of diverse backgrounds.

The California Department of Education will:

1. Provide preservice training and resources to help prospective teachers develop skills in working with families and in encouraging and increasing parent involvement.

   Activities of the California Department of Education will support the California Department of Education and University of California Joint Subcommittee on Parent Involvement by:

   a. Publishing a brochure for teachers to show them how to involve parents in the education of their children at home
   b. Coordinating a parent involvement conference for teacher educators and prospective teachers that focuses on designing and implementing home-learning practices and activities
   c. Continuing to publish a semiannual newsletter for teacher educators, prospective teachers, and school district personnel on a variety of topics for parent involvement

2. Train school teachers and administrators on strategies for family-school partnerships.

   In collaboration with the U. S. Department of Education, the California Department of Education will pilot-test in selected California school districts a series of workshop modules and materials developed by the U.S. Department of Education. The workshop topics, which address the cultural diversity of families and ways that school administrators and teachers can build partnerships with families, are as follows:

   a. Families as Home-Learning Environments
   b. School System Policies and Supports
   c. School Practices that Foster Home Learning
   d. Teachers' Practices to Engage and Assist Parents

   The Parenting and Community Education Office staff will provide or identify others who will provide, on request, in-service training on parent involvement for district-level and site-level administrators. Other activities will include:

   a. Producing training videos and materials to convey the importance of family involvement and focus on guidelines, strategies for change, and effective practices

for enhancing parents' involvement in home learning and in volunteering and decision making at school

b. Identifying experts at the national, state, and local levels and in higher education to provide technical assistance and training to school administrators and teachers on building relationships with families and on designing and implementing site-level parent involvement programs

c. Developing a booklet for school administrators on strategies to involve parents effectively in school operations

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

School districts and county agencies will build support from teachers and administrators for family involvement by:

1. Organizing conferences and training seminars that focus on:
   a. Building collaboration with families on how to implement the six types of parent involvement emphasized in the California State Board of Education's policies
   b. Developing parent and community support for schools
   c. Developing skills for working with parents of diverse cultural backgrounds
   d. Improving communication between schools and families (For example, *Communicating with Parents*, a sourcebook of ideas and strategies for building effective communication with families, is available from the San Diego County Office of Education.)
2. Using cable and satellite television networks to provide training on understanding diverse cultural and family backgrounds and helping families to become partners with school staffs (For example, the Educational Telecommunications Network [ETN], a service of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, provides staff development and parent education programs throughout California.)
3. Networking with institutions of higher learning to involve prospective teachers in school and district levels with training and projects for parent involvement

GOAL

5

Parents and Community

Schools will maximize opportunities for parents and other community members to participate in and support children's education at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels.

Researcher Reginald Clark's study (1983) of ten low-income African-American families and their high school-aged children concluded that a family's cultural style, not the marital status, educational level, or income of the parents, or the social surroundings of the family determine whether children will do well in school. Clark found that in homes where students were high achievers, regardless of whether there were one or two parents, patterns that prevailed were:

- Positive attitudes toward education
- Clear, consistent limits for children
- Frequent warm, nurturing interactions between parents and children
- High expectations for children to succeed
- Strong parental involvement in school activities (periodic visits to school, recommendations for school decisions, meetings with teachers, and so forth)

In *Together Is Better: Building Strong Partnerships Between Schools and Hispanic Parents,* a publication of the Hispanic Policy Development Project, (Nicolau and Ramos, 1990), the writers offer strong recommendations on how to involve Hispanic families in schools:

- Communication with Hispanic families must be warm and nonjudgmental.
- Respect for parents' feelings and concerns must be conveyed by school personnel.
- School personnel must be sensitive to the culture and needs of families.
- Schools may need to explore many techniques for reaching and recruiting Hispanic families. Home visits are an effective way to accomplish this goal.

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Establishment of multifaceted support and opportunities for parents and other community members to become involved in children's schooling at all levels
- Increased numbers of family-community-school-partnership programs

To strengthen parents' willingness to become involved in their children's education, schools must promote an environment in which parents are valued and recognized as essential partners in their children's lives. Schools with successful family-school partnerships have principals and other administrators who actively promote opportunities for school partnerships with families and the community. The school leadership demonstrates the commitment to building collaborative relationships with families. Administrators and teachers in successful schools openly convey the importance of the parents' and other family members' involvement in the child's learning.

Sociologist James Coleman describes the supportive relationships that exist in the family or community outside the family as *social capital*. Examples of social capital in the family may include parents reading to or listening to their children reading, talking to their children about school, monitoring their children's homework, or helping their children in middle school or high school to select courses (Coleman, 1991).

Examples of social capital in the community include community programs that offer assistance to children, such as dropout prevention programs, church and community tutorial programs, and youth service organizations.

Effective schools support the important roles that parents and other community members must play in the school and in children's education. Such activities should give parents and other community members, teachers, support staff, and administrators opportunities to make recommendations concerning school-level decisions. As partners in school decision-making activities, parents can help to set goals; review and recommend policies; and plan, implement, and evaluate curriculum.

STRATEGY 5

Strengthen the capacity of families and other community members to become involved in the education of children at all levels of the educational system.

The California Department of Education will encourage parents and the community to assume meaningful roles and enhance their ability to support children's learning by:

1. Developing a video and printed materials on successful parenting strategies. Civic, school, and church organizations will be encouraged to use the video and materials for meetings and group discussions.
2. Developing, monitoring, and evaluating a telecommunications project that links television, telephones, and computers to address the educational needs of parents and to enhance communications between parents and teachers.
3. Developing and distributing parenting brochures for parents with children in preschool through grade twelve. Camera-ready masters will be accessible for reprinting.

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

School districts and schools will provide opportunities for involving parents in their children's education across all grades by:

1. Soliciting feedback and building parent-staff relationships through a variety of options:
   a. **Parent-community surveys.** The assessment of school programs and activities provides information on the quality of education and parental and community attitudes about the school.
   b. **Parent-teacher organizations.** The formation of organizations for parents and teachers (such as PTAs) or for parents, teachers, and students (PTSAs) will build support for schools. For example, the California State PTA's Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) campaign provides resources to enhance parents' education programs in schools and districts.
   c. **Communiques.** Teachers may send notes, newsletters, progress reports, and curriculum information for parents to review, sign, and comment on.
   d. **Advisory councils for parents, teachers, and administrators.** Schools can promote broadly based recommendations by including parents as members of schools' self-study review teams; in the development of policies for discipline, attendance, and homework; in the review and evaluation of instructional materials; and in curriculum planning and evaluation.
   e. **Parent-teacher conferences.** Conferences initiated by teachers or parents can be held at school or at the parents' home to establish rapport, provide an opportunity for problem solving, and improve students' behavior and academic progress.
   f. **Principal's coffee hours.** Weekly informal meetings with parents build effective communication between parents and the school's administrators.
2. Involving parents in children's learning in school through:
   a. **Back-to-school meetings.** Sessions for parents held when school starts enable them to meet their children's teachers and become acquainted with the teachers' expectations for student achievement, classroom behavior, homework routines, textbooks, and so forth.
   b. **Parents' visits.** Classroom visits provide opportunities for parents to observe their children's learning and behavior in school. (School

practices that welcome parents into classrooms at all levels help to establish and maintain positive relationships with parents and improve students' learning.)

c. **Volunteer programs.** Parents and community members can offer support and assistance to school staff to improve schoolwide achievement; for example, chaperone on field trips and tutor in classrooms.

d. **Telecommunication networks.** Telephones linked with computers will enable teachers and parents to communicate about home-learning activities and homework.

e. **Weekly or monthly calendars.** Schools can provide families with information on home learning activities, school and sports events, holidays, schedules, dates for parent clubs and special parent education meetings, and dates for school tests.

f. **Parent training.** Free instruction initiated by the district and school can be offered at times and locations convenient for parents. Examples are sessions on federal, state, and district policies and guidelines on special education; Chapter 1, bilingual education, and migrant education; curriculum and grade-level instruction; graduation requirements; applications for college grants, scholarships, and so forth; drug and alcohol abuse; and training for understanding the School Accountability Report Card issued by each school district and performance reports issued by the state.

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GOAL

6

Incentives

School districts will establish incentive programs in schools to encourage teachers to extend the school curriculum to the home.

Teachers' practices that link parents to the instructional program tend to have consistently strong, positive effects on parental support. Furthermore, according to researcher Joyce Epstein, from Johns Hopkins University, studies of parents' evaluations of teachers reveal that teachers who involve parents are considered better. Teachers who use a variety of techniques, such as home-learning activities, receive high ratings on interpersonal skills and overall teaching quality (Epstein, 1983).

In Maryland Epstein surveyed parents of 1,269 students in first, third, and fifth grades in 82 classrooms. According to the researcher the children's teachers differed in their emphasis on parent involvement. School principals surveyed rated some teachers as strong leaders in parent involvement; others, as frequently involving parents; and some, as seldom involving them. Children's test scores revealed that teachers' strong leadership in involving parents in their children's learning at home significantly influenced children's test scores in reading (*The Evidence Continues to Grow,* 1987).

Epstein concludes that the teacher is the key to involving parents in classroom learning. She worries that unless the teacher initiates and follows through on activities for parent involvement, only those parents who would participate anyway will become involved (*CREMS Report,* 1987).

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Increased numbers of teachers implementing effective parent involvement practices
- Expansion of awards and incentives to teachers for extending classroom activities to the home

STRATEGY 6

Provide teachers with incentives to develop innovative ideas that help to link parent involvement to classroom learning.

The California Department of Education will encourage efforts that increase teachers' practices of parent involvement.

California teachers will be invited to a statewide symposium on teachers' practices for linking parent involvement to classroom learning. The symposium will feature training on writing grants to increase teachers' opportunities to compete for family-school partnership grants.

The California Department of Education will also develop a videotape that features exemplary teacher-initiated parent involvement programs and activities in California schools.

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

School districts and county offices of education will encourage teachers' involvement and support for family involvement through a variety of activities, including the following:

1. Increasing the opportunities for staff members at all levels to receive professional development and training on research that relates to effective practices of parent involvement
2. Arranging release of time for teachers to visit and network with colleagues inside and outside their local district who have implemented new ideas in parent involvement that support children's learning
3. Providing grants to support teachers in action research projects
4. Conducting workshops on writing grants to encourage teachers to seek grants from the private and public sectors for developing materials for parents to use with their children at home

Goal

7

Early Interventions

Parents will have access to the resources and training needed to strengthen the learning environment of their young children during the preschool years.

Findings from research studies on the development of children have given the impetus for education programs that involve the family in the beginning years of a child's life. Many of these programs focus on how the home environment influences a child. Studies of early intervention programs that began in the early sixties showed that parent involvement is the key to a child's success.

These studies influenced the establishment of Missouri's successful Parents as Teachers Program, which has proved that a strong partnership with the home must begin at the onset of a child's learning. In 1981 the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education launched the first pilot New Parents as Teachers project in four school districts. Yearly grants of $30,000 were awarded for four years to develop and implement programs. A minimum of 60 prospective parents who were expecting their first child were recruited for the four pilot projects. Parents from a broad range of socioeconomic and educational backgrounds participated. An evaluation of the program revealed that participating children showed advanced intellectual and language development and significantly demonstrated more aspects of positive social development than did a comparison group of children. Parents participating in the program were more knowledgeable about child-rearing practices and child development than were a comparison group of parents (*New Parents as Teachers,* 1988).

All Missouri school districts are required to provide educational programs for developmentally delayed three-year-old and four-year-old children and parent education and periodic screening for children through age four to detect developmental problems (Reed and Sautter, 1990).

California's efforts in establishing programs for the development of children are carried out through the California Department of Education's Child Development Division, which administers the state's child care and development programs. These programs include components for understanding children's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional growth. These programs also support families through parent education and provide services such as health, social, and family counseling.

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Coordination of statewide early intervention parenting programs
- Establishment of the Parents as Teachers Program in selected school districts

The National School District in National City has the only Parents as Teachers (PAT) training center in California. Located near San Diego, the district offers an intensive five-day institute to help district and school teams implement PAT programs.

Assembly Bill 3646 (Vasconcellos), which enacted the Parents as Teachers Grant Program, became California law in September, 1990. The bill, with support from federal funds, will establish the Parents as Teachers Grant Program to meet the educational needs of parents with children three years of age or less.

California Assembly Bill 499 (Watson), which established the Early Intervention for School Success (EISS) Grant Program, was signed into law in 1991. The implementation of the EISS program is managed by the Orange County Office of Education. More than 90,000 students in California have been served.

The foundation for this program came from Senate Bill 1256 (Watson), which became law in 1985. Provisions were made to help schools and parents focus on children's learning needs during prekindergarten and first grade.

Another family-centered education program is the federally funded Even Start Family Literacy Program, authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Public Law 100-297. This program is a discretionary grant program designed to help parents of young children become full partners in their children's education and to help them reach their full potential. This program integrates early childhood education and adult education in a unified family center program. What distinguishes Even Start Family Literacy is that its preschool, adult education, and parenting components work together.

STRATEGY 7

Promote early intervention programs designed to strengthen and reinforce the role of families in children's growth and development.

The California Department of Education will encourage the development of early childhood education programs that increase parents' knowledge of and confidence in child-rearing activities.

After receiving funds to implement the Parents as Teachers Grant Program, the California Department of Education will develop requests for proposals and select applicants from county offices of education, as stipulated in Assembly Bill 3646. As a condition for the receipt of Assembly Bill 3646 grant proceeds, applicants selected must participate in an in-service training program sponsored by the California Department of Education.

The Compensatory Education Office administers the Even Start Family Literacy grant awards. Units from the Department, including the Adult Education and Parenting and Community Education Office, will support the Compensatory Education Office's Even Start Family Literacy activities, including its technical assistance meetings and in-service training.

The California Department of Education will continue to provide leadership and support to the Early Intervention for School Success (EISS) Grant Program. The Orange County Office of Education, in conjunction with the California Department of Education, will continue to provide technical assistance and training and serve as a statewide dissemination agency for EISS.

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

School districts will help children to prepare for school by:

1. Networking with county offices, institutions of higher education, child-care agencies, and social and health agencies to coordinate a comprehensive system of children's and family services to ensure the healthy development of children
2. Involving families of preschool children in a program that provides information and guidance on child development, parenting, and child rearing
3. Strengthening the relationship with families of preschool children by implementing outreach strategies to involve parents as partners in their children's education (The Parents as Teachers Program provides support and assistance to families with young children through personal home visits, group meetings, developmental screening and reporting to parents, training, and materials for parenting.)
4. Offering comprehensive parent training through adult basic education classes and community-based programs

GOAL

8

Accessing Resources

School districts will use available resources and pursue funding and support from public and private sources to meet the goals, strategies, and activities in the *California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education.*

Because declining economic conditions in California have limited the state funding available for implementing innovative programs, many districts are seeking support from private foundations and businesses. A few districts are mobilizing community resources. In view of this situation, school districts are strengthening their efforts to restructure by establishing networks to provide staff and parent training, information, and resource materials to help children achieve academic and social success.

Recognizing that education concerns everyone, many corporations have become increasingly sensitive to the needs and values in their communities. Some businesses have instituted flexible leave policies that enable employees to become involved in their children's school, thus increasing the potential for positive relationships among corporations, schools, and families (Espinoza, 1988).

California legislators also recognize that the potential for building strong networks for families and schools involves the business community. In support of this concept, Assembly Bill 3782 (*Labor Code* Section 230.8) was signed into law on September 12, 1990. According to the bill, employers with 25 or more employees working at the same site cannot discharge or discriminate against employees who want to visit their child's school. Employees who must be parents or guardians of children in kindergarten through grade twelve may take four hours per child during each school year to visit their child's school. The employee must notify the employer before the absence and must use existing vacation, personal leave, or compensatory time off unless a collective bargaining agreement provides for other arrangements.

Assembly Bill 3782 encourages parents to participate in school activities and provides a virtually untapped resource for improving a school's programs. Schools can capitalize on increased opportunities to communicate with parents who otherwise would be hard to reach.

Opportunities for volunteers to contribute to the educational process have expanded greatly. School volunteers, including parents and

OUTCOMES

By the year 2000:

- Increased parental involvement resources to implement, monitor, and evaluate district and school programs
- New legislation for adequate funding to implement parent involvement programs
- Increased public and private networks for parent involvement

representatives from business, industry, higher education, and the community, can provide a wide range of support by participating in such activities as:

- Family education programs; for example, adult literacy, family reading, and child care
- Tutorial programs
- Career education presentations for student and family counseling
- Staff development
- Curriculum development and instruction
- School management
- Monitoring of student activities

A 1987–88 U. S. Department of Education study of volunteers in public schools with an enrollment above 500 reported that volunteers were used in about 75 percent of all elementary schools and in more than 50 percent of all middle schools and high schools (*Volunteers in Public Schools,* 1990). Elementary schools averaged 24 volunteers per school, and middle schools and high schools averaged 15 volunteers per school.

The study also found that fewer volunteers were used in public schools with high enrollments of minority students. A possible explanation is that schools with high proportions of minority enrollments were generally located in areas where the residents have low incomes and little time or energy to volunteer (*Volunteers in Public Schools,* 1990). Whatever the reason for the lack of participation, evidence reveals that volunteers are greatly needed in schools, especially in those where fewer parents are able to participate.

STRATEGY 8

Use all available resources to implement and evaluate the California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education.

The California Department of Education will expand the available human and financial resources to support parental involvement in local schools districts by:

1. Establishing a clearinghouse within the Department to provide research studies, national and state reports, parent education training materials, brochures, videotapes, and information on funding and family-school partnership programs
2. Developing and publishing a directory of private corporations and foundations in California that will fund parent involvement projects at all grade levels
3. Seeking corporate sponsors to fund selected statewide parent involvement projects included in *The California Strategic Plan for Parental Involvement in Education*
4. Providing assistance on evaluating parent involvement programs based on quality criteria

Activities in Local Educational Agencies

School districts will access available resources to develop, implement, and evaluate current district and school-level programs of parent involvement, including:

1. Using a coordinator of district parent involvement programs to identify activities of all such programs in local schools
2. Involving parents, community members, students, and school staffs in a needs assessment to identify the strength of and need for parent involvement in local schools. (A program's strengths and needs should be shared with parents and the community and used for program planning.)
3. Involving parents, community members, and school staffs in developing comprehensive district-level and school-level action plans for parent involvement
4. Increasing linkages with parents, local businesses, and community-based organizations (for example, churches, youth services, and nonprofit agencies) to commit resources to parent involvement in education
5. Using liaisons of parents and community members, employed by the district to facilitate communications with other parents and to coordinate activities that involve the family and community, including school mentoring and volunteering programs
6. Opening schools to serve as family resource centers for job counseling and training, sources of materials, and sites for workshops and group activities in the evenings and on weekends
7. Monitoring questionnaires, interviews, and answer sessions for teachers, parents, and community members and evaluating other indicators for determining a program's strengths and weaknesses

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Appendix A

QUALITY CRITERIA

Parent Involvement Program Quality Criteria

The quality criteria for each of the six types of parent involvement emphasized in the California State Board of Education's policy are presented to facilitate a review of school-level parent involvement programs. The information will also help schools during the planning, implementing, and evaluation process.

School: _____

District: _____

Evaluator: _____

Type 1	**Help parents develop parenting skills and foster conditions at home that support children's efforts in learning.**	
Criteria	*Effectiveness* [1]	*Comments*
The school offers workshops, materials, lectures, videotapes, and other activities that promote a home environment in which parents serve as models and support their children by providing proper nutrition, clothing, shelter, and safety.	1 2 3	
The school takes an active role in helping parents enhance their parenting and child-rearing skills.	1 2 3	

Type 2	**Provide parents with knowledge of techniques designed to assist children in learning at home.**	
Criteria	*Effectiveness* [1]	*Comments*
The school offers materials, workshops, and other activities to assist parents in helping their children build or improve learning skills at home.	1 2 3	
Teachers communicate with parents on how to help children at home through newsletters, conferences, workshops, communiques from teachers and principals, meetings, and so forth.	1 2 3	

[1]Degree of Effectiveness: 1 = Ineffective, 2 = Adequate, 3 = Very effective.

Type 3	**Provide access to and coordinate community and support services for children and families.**	
Criteria	*Effectiveness* [1]	*Comments*
Through informal training the school increases parents' willingness and ability to access community services children need.	1 2 3	
Community resources, such as businesses, libraries, parks and museums, community-based organizations, and local governmental agencies support the school and are used to enhance its learning environment.	1 2 3	

Type 4	**Promote clear, two-way communication between the school and the family as to school programs and children's progress.**	
Criteria	*Effectiveness* [1]	*Comments*
The school promotes ongoing, two-way family-school communications. Workshops, meetings, parent-teacher conferences, and communiques from principals and teachers will be used to inform parents about the school curriculum at all grade levels.	1 2 3	
Students and parents receive frequent assessment of and advice about academic performance and behavior.	1 2 3	

Type 5	**Involve parents, after appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school.**	
Criteria	*Effectiveness* [1]	*Comments*
The school encourages all parents and other family members to volunteer at school to improve the school and its programs. Volunteers are trained in ways to support goals and student learning.	1 2 3	
Parents support their children by attending student performances (for example, plays, concerts, debates, or academic decathalons) and sports activities and other school events such as parent meetings and workshops.	1 2 3	

Type 6	**Support parents as decision makers and develop their leadership, governance, advisory, and advocacy roles.**	
Criteria	*Effectiveness* [1]	*Comments*
The school recruits parents to take decision-making roles in the PTA or other parent-teacher organizations, advisory councils, or other committees or groups at the school or district level or both. Parents and community activists in independent advocacy groups monitor the school's activities or work for school improvement or both.	1 2 3	
The school trains parents to participate in effective leadership and school governance roles.	1 2 3	

[1]Degree of Effectiveness: 1 = Ineffective, 2 = Adequate, 3 = Very effective.

Appendix B

Chapter 16 Programs to Encourage Parent Involvement*

California *Education Code* Sections 11500 Through 11506

§ 11500. Legislative Findings and Declarations

The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Despite a substantial increase in school funding over the last five years, a significant percentage of the school-aged population, particularly in large urban areas, is learning well below the statewide average and is making only marginal progress at best.

(b) Parental involvement and support in the education of children is an integral part of improving academic achievement. Educational research has established that properly constructed parent involvement programs can play an important and effective role in the participation of parents in their children's schools and in raising pupil achievement levels.

(c) The federal government has recognized the critical role of parents in the educational process and now mandates parental involvement programs as a condition of eligibility for funds under the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-297).

(d) The State Board of Education has also adopted a policy urging the creation of parent involvement programs in all schools.

(e) California's School Improvement Program has historically maintained parent involvement as one of its component parts.

(f) Research and experience have demonstrated that these programs succeed only when certain components are made part of the program.

§ 11501. Legislative Intent

It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this chapter to ensure that parent involvement programs are properly designed and implemented and to provide a focus and structure for these programs based on prior experience and research while maintaining sufficient local flexibility to design a program that best meets the needs of the local community.

§ 11502. Purpose

It is the purpose and goal of this chapter to do all of the following:

(a) To engage parents positively in their children's education by helping parents to develop skills to use at home that support their children's academic efforts at school and their children's development as responsible future members of our society.

(b) To inform parents that they can directly affect the success of their children's learning, by providing parents with techniques and strategies that they may utilize to improve their children's academic success and to assist their children in learning at home.

(c) To build consistent and effective communication between the home and the school so that parents may know when and how to assist their children in support of classroom learning activities.

(d) To train teachers and administrators to communicate effectively with parents.

(e) To integrate parent involvement programs, including compliance with this chapter, into the school's master plan for academic accountability.

§ 11503. Parent Involvement Program; Establishment; Elements

The governing board of each school district shall establish a parent involvement program for each school in the district that receives funds under Chapter 1 of the federal Elementary and Secondary

*Chapter 16 added 1990 Laws. Chapter 1400. Effective January 1, 1991.

Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-290). That program shall contain at least the following elements:

(a) Procedures to ensure that parents are consulted and participate in the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of the program.

(b) Regular and periodic programs throughout the school year that provide for training, instruction, and information on all of the following:

(1) Parental ability to directly affect the success of their children's learning through the support they give their children at home and at school.

(2) Home activities, strategies, and materials that can be used to assist and enhance the learning of children both at home and at school.

(3) Parenting skills that assist parents in understanding the development needs of their children and in understanding how to provide positive discipline for, and build healthy relationships with, their children.

(4) Parental ability to develop consistent and effective communications between the school and the parents concerning the progress of the children in school and concerning school programs.

(c) An annual statement identifying specific objectives of the program.

(d) An annual review and assessment of the program's progress in meeting those objectives. Parents shall be made aware of the existence of this review and assessment through regular school communications mechanisms and shall be given a copy upon the parent's request.

§ 11504. Adoption of Policy on Parent Involvement

The governing board of each school district shall adopt a policy on parent involvement, consistent with the purposes and goals set forth in Section 11502, for each school not governed by Section 11503.

§ 11505. Design and Implementation of Program; Contracts

To the extent permitted by federal law, a school district may contract with nonprofit organizations and agencies experienced in administering parent involvement programs to design or implement, or design and implement, a school's parent involvement program.

§ 11506. Receipt of Funds; Eligibility; Compliance with Chapter

Schools that receive federal funds under Chapter 1 of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 (P.L. 100-297), and receive funds for school improvement plans pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 52000) of Part 28 or economic impact aid pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 54020) of Chapter 1 of Part 29, may receive funds for school improvement plans pursuant to Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 52000) of Part 28 or economic impact aid pursuant to Article 2 (commencing with Section 54020) of Chapter 1 of Part 29 only if they comply with this chapter.

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